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Reaction to the EU 2040 climate target from European youth networks

Youth organisations welcome the commitment of the European Commission to an increased ambition in putting forward the reduction target of 90% by 2040. However, concerns arise regarding the level of target's ambition, heavy reliance on technology to achieve this target and ignoring the importance of addressing resource overconsumption.

It is now urgent that the forthcoming European Commission makes this target binding to pave the way for a more ambitious green and just transition that takes into account its historical responsibilities while prioritising intergenerational justice. European youth remains mobilised to make sure that this commitment will be upheld to avoid the imposition of an unfair burden on future generations.

Agata Meysner, President of Generation Climate Europe highlighted: *"Aiming for net zero by 2040 is crucial to ensure the rights of youth and future generations. Although we recognise an increased ambition on the 2040 target, the European Commission missed an opportunity to pave the way to a future-proof, green and just Europe by ignoring the 95% recommended by the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (ESABCC)¹ and the European Commission's Impact Assessment."*

María Rodríguez Alcázar, President of the European Youth Forum said: *"Lowering emissions cannot be separated from the need for a strong change in the way the European society consumes. Our current levels of consumption are not in line with a sustainable economy, and we regret that the Communication does not include a strong emphasis on the need to overcome overconsumption to address our triple planetary crisis."*

Stephanny Ulivieri, Chairperson of the Board of Youth and Environment Europe affirmed: *"While acknowledging the EU's commitment to a 90% CO2 reduction by 2040, we can't ignore concerns about an overemphasis on technology. The Commission's upcoming actions must go beyond rhetoric, making this commitment legally binding. A truly just*

¹ As expressed by the European Advisory Board on Climate Change in June 2023:
climate-advisory-board.europa.eu/reports-and-publications/scientific-advice-for-the-determination-of-an-eu-wide-2040

green transition demands more than words—it necessitates concrete actions that prioritise equity and intergenerational justice. As European youth, we're watchful and engaged, urging for accountability and a fair share in building a sustainable future."

We and the youth networks we represent stand ready to support and advocate for the implementation of policies that will contribute to the achievement of an ambitious 2040 target, ensuring a just future for Europe and the world beyond.